QUANTA

NEWS

SUPPLEMENT

QUANTA
QL USERS & TINKERERS ASSOCIATION

QUANTA

INFORMATION ON THE ASSOCIATION

Membership of QUANTA, the independent QL user group, is by annual subscription. The Membership Secretary can supply full details. Copies of the association's constitution & annual accounts are available from the Secretary. There is an extensive software library and active national subgroups. Details are in the membership guide and occasionally in this magazine.

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EDITORIAL LEE PRIVETT

No sooner do we nearly get the magazine finished when another bus load of important news comes along, so in this special supplement, please find even more STUFF to read about.

<div align="right">Ed.</div>

QUANTA NEWS PT 2 DILWYN JONES

If you have QL-related news items that you'd like us to include on this page, please get in touch with News Editor - Dilwyn Jones at news@quanta.org.uk

News From George Gwilt

George Gwilt writes:
There are a few software updates on my website:
http://gwiltprogs.info

1.   NET_PEEK v 3.42 displays graphics information for CON/ SCR channels in programs compiled by TURBO.

2. TURBO TK Code v 3.42 contains the keyword TURBO_DUMMY which can be used, in conjunction with TURBO_V, as a substitute for functions returning floating point.
(The fact that both new versions are 3.42 is purely coincidental!)

3. Turbo TK Code contains the additional keyword TURBO_DUMMY. This is because, although I am fairly certain that that keyword was supposed to be added as a replacement for functions returning floating point values when using TURBO_V, it appears that TURBO_DUMMYF was added instead. Now both are
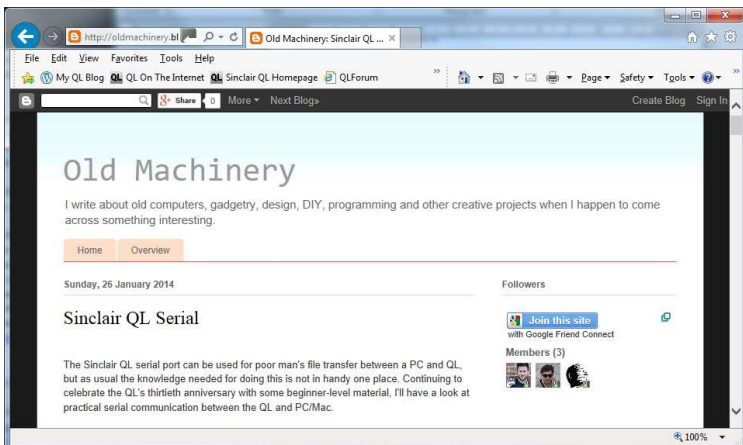
available in v 3.42.

4. One of NET_PEEK's capabilities is displaying information about channels. In particular S*BASIC CON/SCR channels have a section showing graphical information. For example this section shows whether, in turtle graphics, you have PENUP or PENDOWN. This information is available in programs compiled by Turbo and is now displayed for the first time by NET_PEEK v 3.42.

Old Machinery Blog

Tero Heikkinen in Finland writes the 'Old Machinery' blog at http://oldmachinery.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/ql
 While geared to the retro-computing scene, it contains some interesting QL posts as well, such as QL networking, use of QL procedures to create a graphical command set, and using a serial link to transfer files between QL and PC.

Old Machinery website

QPC2 v4.01 Free For All!

Marcel Kilgus has announced that, to celebrate the birth of his daughter, he has made QPC2 available free to download from his website. In a posting on 31st January he said:

"I have mentioned that I intended to make QPC2 available and free for all for some time and the first fruit of this could be observed for QL Today subscribers with QPC2 v4 on the last QL-Today DVD. Now, to celebrate the birth of my first and very lovely daughter (who turns one week old in exactly 3 hours), I follow up on my promise and finally make QPC2 available for everybody to enjoy. Head over to http://www.kilgus.net/qpc/downloads.html to get it. The package contains QPC2 v4.01 and the latest SMSQ/E 3.18."

A couple of days later, Marcel wrote:

"There was a bug in the installer that created the qpc.ini and qpcdemo.win files write protected when installing using the "all users" option. This has been fixed. Also, the default qpc.ini file suppressed the config dialog, which has been fixed, too. It's still 4.01 as QPC itself has not changed."

Sandy Electronics LLC

Dave Park has resurrected the 'Sandy Electronics' name in order to market some products he is trying to bring to market in this thirtieth year of the QL. On the 2nd of February, he wrote on the ql-users list:

"Yesterday I made a few thousand replacement foam pads [for Microdrive cartridges] on a laser cutter. They're the exact material in the exact size, they're strong self-adhesive, and they're great. In a short while I will post a video showing how they are made and

how to use them. I will be selling them in lots of 10, 25 or 100 for just the amount to cover the cost of making and shipping them (if you're a QUANTA member) or a little more.

"Since replacing the pads is a very delicate task suited only for the most confident and steady of hands, is there someone in the EU who would be willing to offer an install service? I do not think it is good for data for Microdrive cartridges to be mailed to the US - someone in the EU would be better suited. You would be able to charge a flat fee for each cartridge (maybe EURO 0.5 + postage per Microdrive?) and then you would just pay me for the pads at the bulk rate when you have used them.

If interested in that, please get in touch via dave@sinclairql.com The **Gold Card battery holders** are now just about ready to sell too.

In his blog at http://sinclairql.com/wp/ he wrote:
"It's been an epic adventure, but these are finally being manufactured. The new design includes a red plastic case which looks a lot like the original battery. Inside it is contained a PCB with a battery holder to take a CR2032 battery. We expect to receive the first batch of these around the first week of March.

Pricing will be:
£12.00 each plus £2 flat rate shipping for any quantity.
£9.00 each plus £2 flat rate shipping for Quanta members.
The Sandy Electronics store is at http://www.SinclairQL.com/store/
and will open for business on March 1st, 2014.

The coupon code to get 25% off a battery adaptor is "QUANTABAT" and can be used as many times as you like. With QUANTA discount, the adaptors are £9 each, plus flat rate

*shipping of £2 for any quantity. Customers can select to pay in £, €
or $ in the store.*

*All of our future products will offer discounts for Quanta
membership, so if you are not a Quanta member, why not consider
joining? Membership starts at £18/year and includes six bi-monthly
magazines. Discounts on just one future purchase could pay for a
whole year!"*

Working with the designer of the original Qubide IDE interface,
Sandy is working on the **UltimIDE**, a new and more capable IDE
interface, based on QubIDE. The interface is designed to take
advantage of technologies that have developed since the original
QubIDE was developed.

The provisional specification is:

One IDE interface, supporting two IDE drives
One on-board connection for a 1.8″ PATA SSD (not a 2.5 inch
device, which may draw more power than the QL can supply to
UltimIDE). One or two CF slots. A CF card will be included,
containing drivers, utilities, and SMSQ/E. The new design is
entirely surface mount, extremely power efficient, and 100% code/
driver compatible with the original QubIDE.

Expected availability: May/June 2014
The website hints at a few other items of hardware to come – have
a look at the website to see what's happening by the time you read
this!

The Sinclair QL Forum

A Place for Sinclair QL Users to Meet!

[Links to QL Services and Websites • The Sandy blog, forum and store...](#)

The Sandy blog:
http://SinclairQL.com/

The Sandy store:
http://SinclairQL.com/store/

The Sandy forum (support forum for Sandy customers):
http://SinclairQL.com/forum/

Pyramide Software

Rich Mellor says he now has a full copy of Mr Smith by Pyramide and has permission from Daniele Purlich at Pyramide to re-release all of their titles on a commercial basis.

On a more general note, Rich is stepping up his efforts to preserve copies of older QL software for the future. He is working with Dave Park on future hosting of the QL Wiki, and is working with another QL user in the USA on a database of QL software and books.

Concept 3D

Concept 3D is now available as freeware.
It's a 3D graphics package, written by the late Robert Fingerle and published by US software house Tesseract Software.
Prior to his death, the author gave permission for the software to be freely released for the QL.

The software is configured for microdrive, so you may need to use a FLP_USE "MDV" command to run it from floppy disk, for
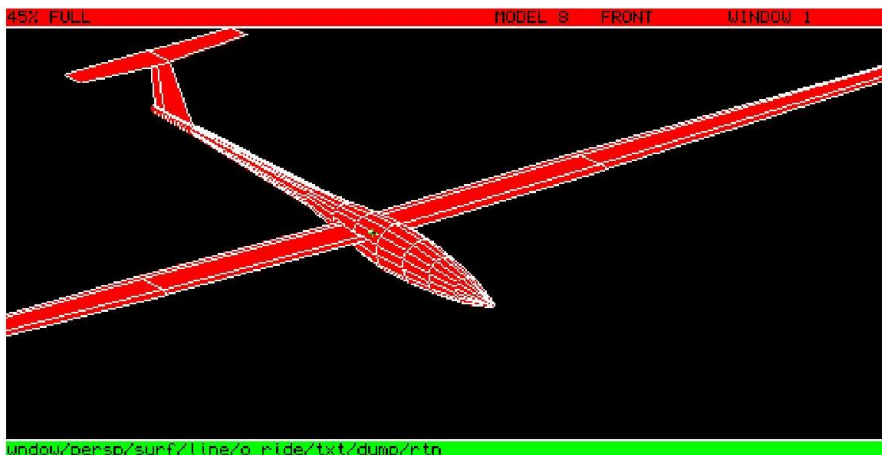
example. Unfortunately, I have no manual for the software, so I have included a magazine review from 1986 with the software in the form of a Quill _doc file called concpt3d_doc which you may wish to read before trying the software.

Alternatively, read the article as a (256K) PDF file on the same page. Although I haven't had time yet to try running the software myself, the review seems to imply it's a great 3D graphics program.

The software is available to download from my website at http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/graphics/index.html
I am grateful to Timothy Swenson for obtaining the permission to release the software, and to Rich Mellor for preserving a copy of the software before it was allowed to vanish forever.

Update: Shortly after I wrote this, I was given a copy of Concept 3D patched to run from disk, now available on the same page. Hopefully if we can find a manual and scan it, we can also make that available.

Glider demo from Concept 3D

Toolkit 2 v2.03

Thanks to Stefan Schomburg, I have been able to add a copy of the ROM image for Toolkit 2 version 2.03 to my website. This is quite an old version, the list of version numbers implies it was the first version to be patched to fix initialisation problems on the MG ROMs. There are a few more recent versions on my website for use with emulators, this will mainly be for posterity and software testing with older versions of Toolkit 2. Download it from: http://www.dilwyn.me.uk/pe/index.html

QL On A Stick

This has had a major update, with the inclusion of the latest version of SMSQmulator and the free version of QPC2. Some useful QL and Windows software have been added too, including disk imaging software (so that you can create images of QL floppy disks for use with emulators using disk images, such as SMSQmulator) and file transfer software such as Jonathan Hudson's wxqt2 system and Norman Dunbar's Qstripper.
Also included is a collection of QL-related icons in PNG and GD2 sprite formats.

There is an online HTML version of the QL User Guide plus various format versions of the QL manual in both A4 and A5 formats, including PDF files, eBook versions and Word doc files. The QL On A Stick is available on a CD ready to transfer to a USB pen drive of your choice for just £5.00 from Quo Vadis Design – order online at http://www.ql-qvd.com/products.html .

A special version (called the QL On A Stick SE) is available direct from Dilwyn Jones on a miniature 2GB pen drive (probably the smallest QL ever) for £10.00

Farmer by Talent, Re-released by RWAP

We have now managed to resurrect yet another former Talent title - FARMER written by J.K. of Finland (would love to know who that was!)

Farmer is a platform game where you play the role of a Farmer who needs to harvest the tomatoes, bananas and pears from your fields.

Whoever said that farming was easy – as well as the usual fear over crop yields and pricing, this year has been unusual.

Not only did your somewhat eccentric uncle leave you a farm where the fields are not joined together, where you have to jump between them or risk the danger of falling down holes between the fields, but the farm appears to have come with its own infestation of monsters whose only pleasure is killing farmhands.

Even the weather has been against you – with all the recent high rain fall, some of the fields have developed soft earth which has turned into sink holes, where the land may give way underneath you.

You can jump over areas, but if you happen to fall too far, you may have to use up one of your three umbrellas as a parachute to slow your fall, instead of losing a life. Luckily there is a lift to get back up to the higher fields.

Once all of the crops have been gathered in, you can move to the next level by jumping into the coloured flashing square.

Order it from http://www.sellmyretro.com/offer/details/Sinclair-QL-Platform-Arcade-Game%3A-Farmer-3626

Screen dump from 'Farmer' (picture courtesy of SellMyRetro.com)

QL Dust Covers

Daniel Rigley (Riggz) at World of Spectrum has been making Spectrum dust covers. Following a request from Peter Scott at QL Forum, they can now make QL dust covers too.

They said: "We can make these with or without the flaps. I reckon with flaps £15 and without £12 +£1 UK postage and £3 E.U.

Anyone can email me at riggz101@yahoo.co.uk. They just have to state (QL cover) in the title."

http://www.worldofspectrum.org
http://www.worldofspectrum.org/forums/showthread.php?t=46268

The QL Dust Covers

Minerva

Dave Park (Sandy) writes:
In other news, I have sourced parts and PCBs for some Minerva Mk IIs. I will assemble and test them, then make them available with or without the I2C cable. Price will be £45 with I2C cable and £40 without, including shipping worldwide. They will be available in mid-March, but I will allow pre-orders so you can ensure you get one. QUANTA members get a 10% discount- to find the coupon code, register in the support forum http://sinclairql.com/forum/ and let me know you're a QUANTA member. Proceeds are going into the hardware development fund.

SMSQ/E v. 3.19 is out.
Wolfgang Lenerz writes:
This contains Marcel's bugfix for the csize in appsub windows. This is also and foremost the first version on my site that also incorporates the QPC specific sources allowing you to compile SMSQE for QPC. The "binaries" file already contains an SMSQ/E v.3.19 file for QPC.

SMSQmulator 1.24
SMSQmulator 1.24 is out. Has a small bugfix, some new replacement instructions (see list on Wolfgang Lenerz's website), and it uses SMSQ/E 3.19.
http://www.wlenerz.com/SMSQmulator/

QPC2 v4.02
Marcel Kilgus writes:
QPC2 v4.02 has just been released. I have only recently converted to Windows 7 and found that the SMSQ/E soft reset using CTRL+ALT+SHIFT+TAB didn't work anymore as Windows now

uses CTRL+ALT+TAB for one of its many task switchers (ignoring the SHIFT key). It wasn't exactly easy, but I finally found a workaround for this.

Also, QPC_VER$ was broken on QPC2v4.

Includes SMSQ/E v3.19 with fixed appsup-window support.

Also, there is a new qpcdemo.win with updated software on it. Plus it now includes **QPAC2**, as every proper system should have that!

(As for **QPAC** well watch this space as they say, Ed.)

Stop Press

Sandy Electronics has just stated the following, for QUANTA members only

People can use the following coupons:

QUANTABAT - 25% off the 40LF220 battery replacement
QUANTAPAD - 25% off replacement Microdrive felt pads
QUANTAMIN - 10% off Minerva MK II - both versions

No limits on coupons - valid all 2014.

COPY DATE for APR/MAY 2014 ISSUE is: 5th APR 2014

Please ensure that your copy reaches the editor on or before that date. Copy on Paper, Magnetic Media or by Email. Text & listings are preferred in ASCII format as text files, Microsoft™ Word Documents or in QL Quill formatted files. All graphic submissions in as higher resolution as possible, preferably in PNG format, other forms of submission can also be accepted, please contact the Editor for details.

All Contributions are Welcome
Copy by Email to - editor@quanta.org.uk